

RESOURCE DOCUMENT 1: GALLATIN COUNTY PROFILE

Gallatin County Growth Policy “A Shared Vision for a New Century”

many of the same economic challenges as the rest of the state, smaller, fragmented part-time farms are accounting for a larger share of agricultural land in the county.

LAND IN FARMS

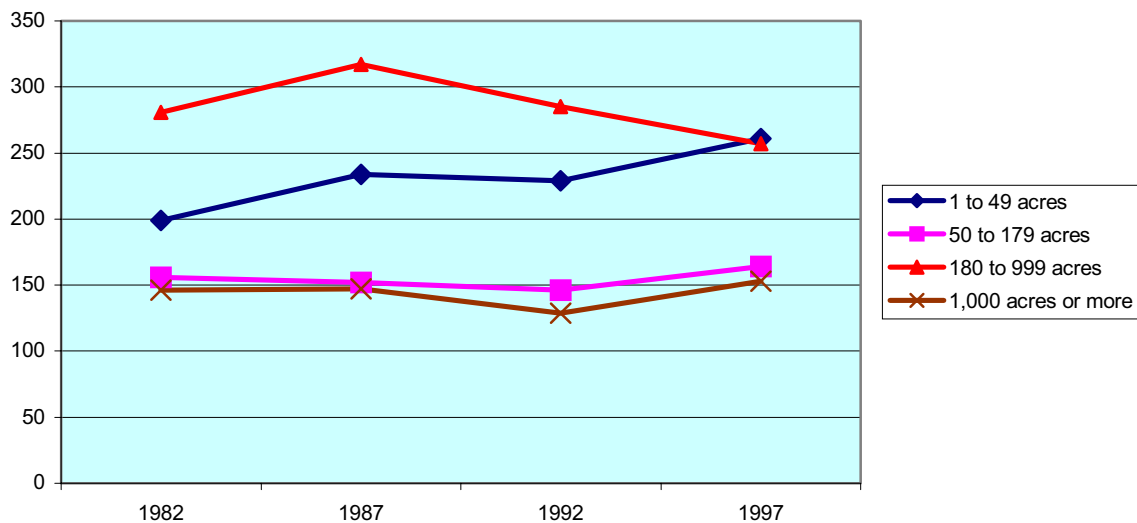
	1982	1987	1992	1997
Total Number of Farms	782	850	789	835
Land in Farms (acres)	774,240	731,603	699,409	759,944
Farms with Cropland	678	737	659	684
Total Cropland (acres)	281,214	305,160	258,593	252,837
Conservation Reserve Program (acres)	n/a	5,366	11,678	13,103

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

1.2.3.A Changes in Farm Size

Current Situation: The average farm size in Gallatin County in 1997 was 910 acres, with a median size of 161 acres, or one quarter-section of land. In the region, Madison County to the west has an average farm size of 2,347 acres and a median of 410 acres, while in Park County to the east the average size is 1,784 acres and the median size is 490 acres. Montana has a state-wide average farm size of about 2,400 acres (3-¾ sections), ranging as high as 2,600 acres over the last 30 years. In Gallatin County between 1982 and 1997, the number of farms between 1 and 49 acres increased by over 31%, while farms between 180 to 999 acres decreased by 8.5%.¹⁴ This may also indicate an increasing fragmentation of mid-size (typically family-run) farms, and an increasing number of smaller units counted as farms in the county.

NUMBER OF FARMS BY ACREAGE



Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

¹⁴ U.S. Census of Agriculture; Planning Department tabulations

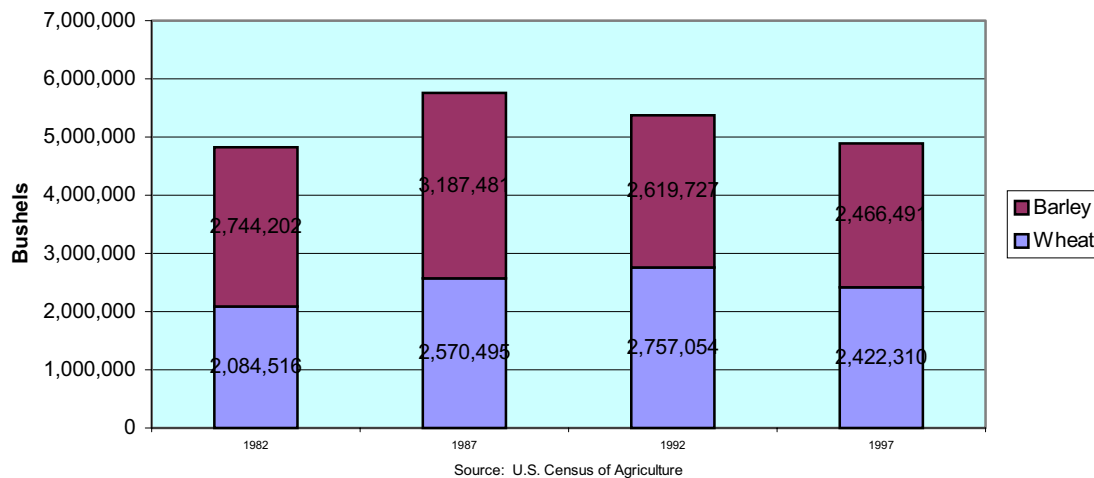
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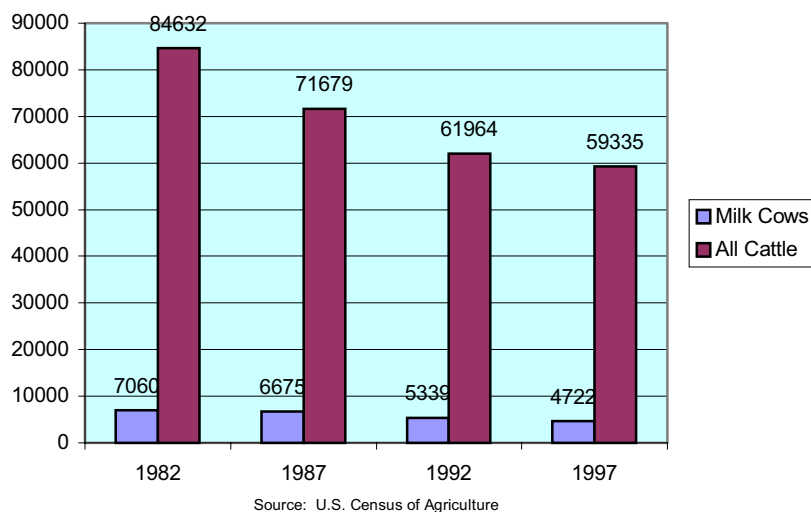
1.2.3.B Crops and Livestock

Current Situation: In 1997, 684 of the 835 farms in the county grew crops: 198 produced 2.4 million bushels of wheat, 219 grew 2.5 million bushels of barley, and 525 brought in 198,261 dry tons of hay.¹⁵ A smaller number of farms had livestock: 463 ran a total of 59,335 cattle (beef and milk cows), 63 had 7,880 sheep and lambs, and 351 had 3,000 horses—in the state, only Ravalli and Lake counties had more horses. Although the number of milking operations decreased from 127 to 41 from 1982 to 1997, they still brought in \$10.8 million in revenue, 30% of all dairy sales in Montana.

SELECT CROPS HARVESTED IN GALLATIN COUNTY

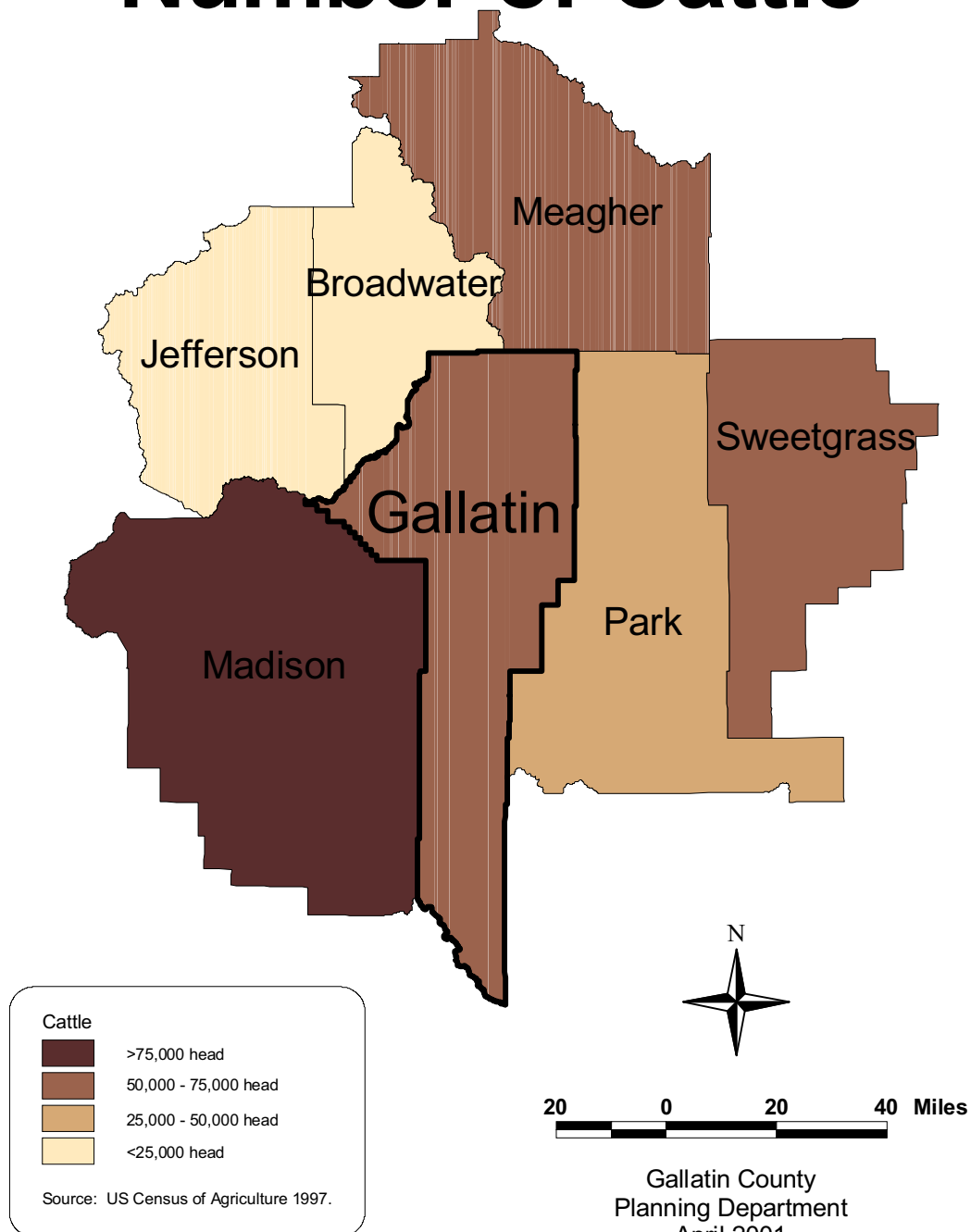


CATTLE IN GALLATIN COUNTY



¹⁵ U.S. Census of Agriculture

Number of Cattle



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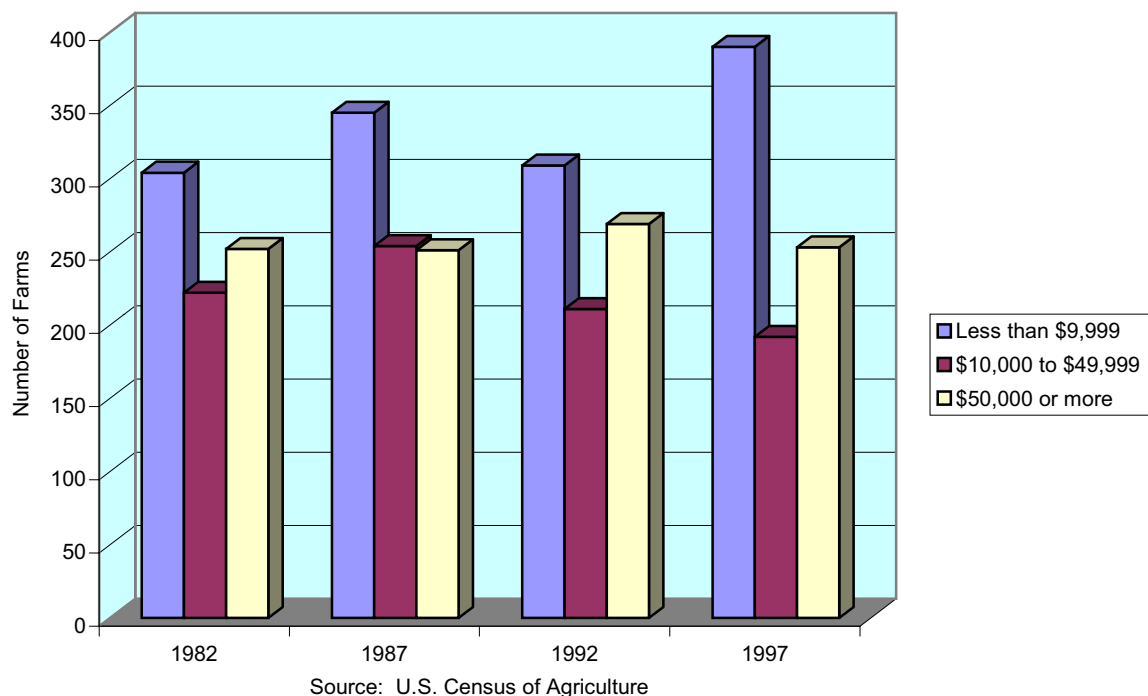
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1.2.3.C Farms by Value of Sales

Current Situation: Almost half (47%) of all farms in Gallatin County realize a market value of goods sold less than \$10,000 per year, compared to 38% state-wide. Since 1982, Gallatin County experienced a 28% increase in farms with revenue from \$0 to \$9,999 per year, while farms with sales valued at \$10,000 to \$49,999 have decreased by 13.5%.¹⁶

Although the number of largest farms have been steady, the decrease in farms with moderate revenue may indicate a decline in full-time family farm producers in Gallatin County, and an increase in smaller part-time farms.

NUMBER OF FARMS BY VALUE OF SALES



1.2.3.D Age and Occupation of Farm Operators

Current Situation: As defined by the Census of Agriculture, a full-time agricultural operator must spend more than 50% of his/her work time at farming or ranching, while the “other”

¹⁶ U.S. Census of Agriculture